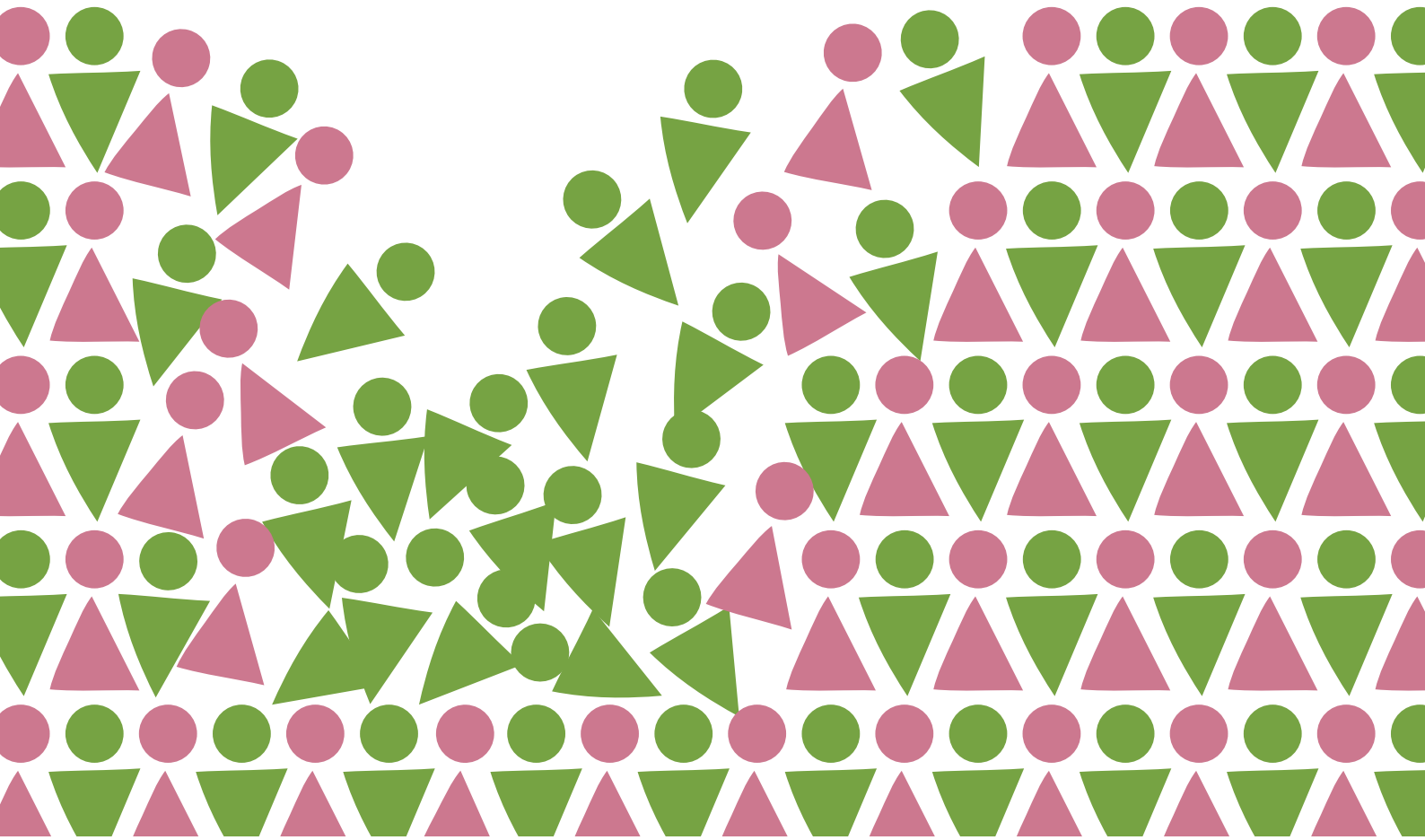


UNSCR 1325: The Participation Promise

“Security Council Resolution 1325 holds out a promise to women across the globe that their rights will be protected and that all barriers to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace will be removed.”¹

gaps []
uk
gender action for peace and security

**NO WOMEN
NO PEACE.**



The participation promise

October 2010 marked the tenth anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 ('SCR 1325') on Women, Peace and Security. The previous ten years have delivered an agenda for action on SCR 1325. However, it is critical that the next ten are about creating real change for women and their conflict-affected communities. We need concrete action backed by resources and commitment at the international, national, and local levels to ensure the participation promise, made to women all over the world, is realised.

SCR 1325 is first and foremost about peace and security. The inclusion of women is rooted in the premise that their presence, participation and perspectives will improve the chances of attaining viable and sustainable peace. It is also based on the knowledge that if half the population faces discrimination and violence there can be no peace.² Rebuilding after conflict provides a window of opportunity to transform the status quo. This requires recognition of the roles which women have played during the conflict (such as combatants, economic actors, leaders and peacemakers in their local communities) and post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery processes which include the needs, skills and experiences of women.

Why does women's participation matter?

*"The participation of women in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding assures their experiences, priorities and solutions contribute to stability, inclusive governance and sustainable peace."*³

A question of justice

Women as a group make up half the world's population and should be able to participate in decisions which affect their lives. This is enshrined in international human rights standards such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

Different perspectives and priorities

Women's experiences of conflict and the aftermath of conflict frequently differ from those of men. The participation of women in peace and recovery processes enables these needs to be identified, prioritised in the planning process and allocated resources.

Different outcomes

The involvement of women's civil society groups in a structured way in peace processes has been shown to have a direct correlation with greater gender sensitivity of the text of agreements, such as in Guatemala, Burundi, Sudan-Darfur and Uganda.⁴

Economic recovery

Over the past fifty years, several of the fastest growing economies have been post-conflict societies and their development has been, in part, due to the increased role of women in trade, production and as entrepreneurs.⁵

Political stability

Women's participation in government at the local, regional and national levels encourages more inclusive, representative and responsive governance.

Social cohesion

Women play a key role in re-establishing the fabric of society, if they have access to productive assets and social services. For example, women are more likely than men to spend their income in a way that benefits their own family and their community.⁶

Peacebuilding efforts will fail

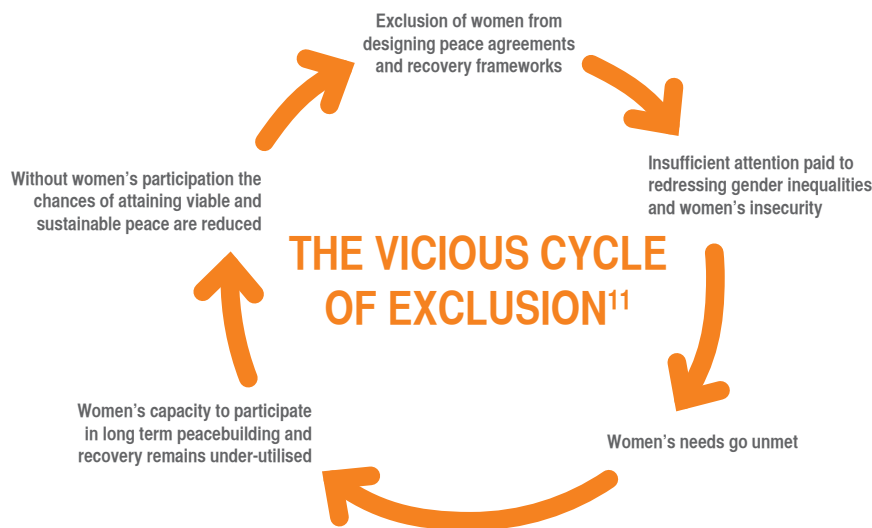
Unless women are supported to achieve political and economic empowerment and are represented equally in all levels of decision-making, including peace negotiations, planning and budget decisions and the security sector, attempts to address the impact of conflict on women and the need to incorporate a gender perspective in peacebuilding will inevitably fail.



What is meaningful participation?

Participation is not about the token addition of a woman in order to tick a box. Numerical representation of women is important but will have little impact unless women are empowered to put forward their views and concerns and to have these considered.⁷ Women are also not a homogenous group and it should be asked which women are participating and which interests they support.

Quotas can provide a much needed entry point for women. In post-conflict countries where quotas have not been used, women make up on average just 12 per cent of parliamentarians. In contrast, women constitute 34 per cent in post-conflict countries which use quotas.⁸ Research has also shown that unless women constitute a minimum of one quarter to one third of a body's membership, they participate little.⁹ However, quotas alone cannot guarantee meaningful participation and must be coupled with long term strategies to tackle the root cause of gender inequality. For example, although the 25 per cent quota has increased women's representation in legislative bodies in Afghanistan, their presence has not always led to action on gender equality, with many women MPs remaining silent on key issues in the face of insecurity and threats to their safety.¹⁰



"Women are looking to participate as strategists in the process because they can speak for themselves, think for themselves, and most important of all they are well placed to recommend strategies for rebuilding the lives of their devastated communities." Anne Mugisha, the Special Envoy of the Forum for Democratic Change in Uganda¹²

The women, peace and security agenda – where are we now?

SCR 1325 calls for...the participation of women at all levels of decision-making, including: in national, regional and international institutions; in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict; in peace negotiations; in peace operations, as soldiers, police and civilians; and as Special Representatives of the UN Secretary-General.¹³

Over the past decade, the women, peace and security agenda of the Security Council has continued to develop in an attempt to tackle the slow pace of progress on SCR 1325. A number of additional resolutions have been adopted: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) focus on preventing and responding to sexual violence as a tactic of war, while 1889 (2009) calls for global indicators to monitor implementation of SCR 1325 and for greater attention to the gender dimensions of post-conflict planning and financing.

Yet, despite these resolutions, implementation has been slow and uneven, particularly in relation to women's participation in preventing, resolving and recovering from conflict. In practice this means peace

negotiations remain the domain of men, post-conflict recovery processes continue to be gender-blind, and local and international efforts to reform the security sector, including the police, judiciary and military, still fail to respond to the security needs of women. Addressing gender inequality continues to be seen as an add-on rather than as central to building sustainable peace and the focus remains on women as passive victims rather than as active agents in the peacebuilding process.

However, recent developments provide hope for real change for women. The new UN entity, UN Women, has identified ensuring women's full participation in conflict resolution as a key priority. An increasing number of member states have introduced national action plans on SCR 1325 including most recently, Estonia, Canada, Nepal, Bosnia-Herzegovina, DRC and the United Kingdom. The UN has developed 26 global indicators¹⁴ together with the Secretary-General's seven point action plan aimed at changing practices among international and national actors.¹⁵ The EU has also adopted indicators for a comprehensive approach to EU implementation of 1325.¹⁶

What's the problem?

SCR 1325 is a product of persistent advocacy by women worldwide calling for the international community to acknowledge their role as voices of peace across their communities. Yet, ironically, peace and post-conflict recovery processes remain largely the domain of male military and political leaders. There are three key areas where the exclusion of women is particularly problematic – peace negotiations; planning and budget decisions; and security sector reform.

The Rhetoric

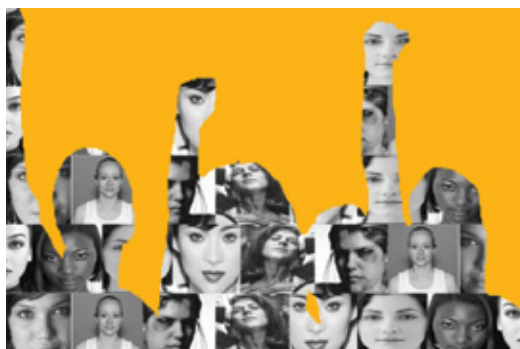
"No lasting peace can be achieved after conflict unless the needs of women are met – not only justice for the victims of crimes of war, but their active involvement in creating a society in which their rights are respected and their voices heard." William Hague, UK Foreign Secretary, 2010

The Reality

- Only 9 per cent of the 14,000 police officers and 2 per cent of the 85,000 military personnel in UN peacekeeping operations are women.¹⁷
- There have been no female chief mediators in UN-brokered peace talks.
- In the UK, as of April 2011, there are no female ministers in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Development or the Ministry of Defence.
- Between 1990 and 2010 only 12 out of 585 peace accords referred to women's needs in rehabilitation or reconstruction.¹⁸
- In a sample of 24 peace processes since 1992 only 2.5 per cent of signatories, 3.2 per cent of mediators, 5.5 per cent of witnesses and 7.6 per cent of negotiators were women.¹⁹
- The Ministry responsible for gender affairs in the DRC receives just 0.02 per cent of the national budget.²⁰
- In Afghanistan, there are only 512 women out of 86,000 national police officers.²¹
- In Nepal, women make up only 2.4 per cent of the judiciary.²²
- In the DRC, 2.7 per cent of the military are women.²³

At the peace table

Peace agreements frequently focus on ending violent conflict which means it is the armed groups who were at the heart of the conflict who are brought to the table.²⁴ Women are shut out on the basis of excuses ranging from a lack of grassroots constituency to a supposed lack of knowledge of the issues or negotiating skills.²⁵ Meanwhile, this same criteria is rarely applied to armed actors. The skills of women as mediators within the home and their experiences building trust and dialogue in their communities are often dismissed as irrelevant by national governments and the international community.



International Women's Commission, Israel-Palestine

In the aftermath of the failed Oslo process, activist women from Israel, Palestine and the international community, formed the International Women's Commission (IWC) and groundbreakingly identified a set of common solutions. However, while the IWC is regularly invited to brief the EU and the UN, they are excluded from formal talks. In 2007, 40 countries and international organisations were invited to participate in the Annapolis peace conference – the IWC was not. Tellingly the US State Department responded to protests by saying it was best if the IWC continued what they do best – *whispering in the ears of decision-makers*.²⁶

Financing for recovery

Analysis by UNIFEM of multi-donor trust funds in post-conflict countries shows that on average just 5.7 per cent of budgets were allocated to spending specifically targeted to benefit women.²⁷ Rule of law, security and economic recovery were particularly lacking in budget provision for women's needs.²⁸ International and national machineries responsible for gender equality are also not adequately resourced. This is not surprising given women are under-represented in processes such as donor conferences and development planning and budget decisions.

The recent commitment by the UN for 15 per cent of UN funding for conflict and post-conflict programs to be on women's issues is encouraging.²⁹ However, the fact that UN Women has secured only roughly one third of its \$500 million budget is a telling sign that financing for gender equality is still not high up on the international community's agenda.

*'Women in civil society are doing tremendous work on the ground, but they are not heard, they are not respected, and above all they are not funded.'*³⁰

Security and justice sector reform

The problem is two-fold and mutually reinforcing. Firstly, women are excluded from participating in the security sector and are under-represented in the police, the judiciary, the military and peacekeeping missions, and secondly these existing structures, are not responsive to the security needs of women. For instance, women are frequently excluded from disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes because of the use of the one weapon per combatant eligibility criteria. In turn, the needs of female ex-combatants are overlooked in these processes.³¹

The important contribution women can make to provision and access to security and justice is frequently not recognised by local actors so that efforts to increase women's participation are often short-lived and ineffective.³² For example, the UN Stabilisation Force in Haiti trained qualified female police officers in the investigation of crimes of gender-based violence. However, national stakeholders were not engaged in this process and these women were relegated to administrative tasks upon their return to duty.³³

Women building peace

When women are meaningfully involved in peace processes, post-conflict planning and the security sector, these processes have been bolstered and strengthened. Women have been able to mediate internally, ensure the agenda reflects the needs of the whole of society, and bring different perspectives to peacebuilding.

Women mediating for peace: Northern Ireland

In Northern Ireland, women secured seats at the peace table by forming the first woman only political party, the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition, and winning seats in the election. The Coalition was made up of both Catholic and Protestant women and was therefore able to engage all of the parties at the talks. When conflicting parties refused to enter into negotiations, the Coalition eased tensions and promoted dialogue while also ensuring the process moved forward. Their role as equal partners within the peace process enabled the women to take on this role as mediators while holding the parties to account on delivering gender-sensitive and inclusive commitments.



The Women's Mass Action for Peace Network succeeded in bringing thousands of Liberian women onto the streets of Monrovia and later Accra when peace talks were taking place. This movement, led by young female leaders without political affiliation, mobilised women across the churches and mosques with the simple demand 'peace and no more war' and worked with the Mano River Women's Peace Network who participated in the formal process. The negotiations in Monrovia, largely focussed on the demands of the warring parties, lasted for six weeks while violence continued on the streets. Finally it was a mass sit-in by the women which barricaded delegates in meeting rooms that led to international mediators securing agreements and setting deadlines.³⁴

Women's mass mobilisation for peace: Liberia

“For generations, women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies. They have proved instrumental in building bridges rather than walls”

Former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan, Open Session of the UN Security Council on Women, Peace and Security, New York, 24 October 2000.



● The inclusion of gender in peace agreements: Uganda

UNIFEM supported five national women's organisations to form the Civil Society Women's Peace Coalition and hold a five day consultation with women in Northern Uganda. A gender advisor was appointed to the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy to the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas and played a key role as an advisor and also as an insider advocate for women's priorities. Training was also provided to women delegates on negotiation skills as well as on the substance of the talks. The support of a gender advisor together with women delegates being well informed about key agenda items resulted in important gains to the substance of the agreements such as the inclusion of women's issues in the DDR agreement.³⁵

The first all women contingent to serve in a peacekeeping operation was deployed in 2007. This Indian female police unit in the UN mission in Liberia has been acknowledged as providing a good model and proving that women can effectively perform roles traditionally designed for men.³⁶ The Unit devote their personal time and resources to interacting with the community. For example, they run a community summer camp which teaches Liberian girls self-defence, first aid and Indian dance. The unit has also focussed on meeting the community's needs such as free medical services, clean drinking water and installation of lighting systems. They have inspired women and girls to take on non-traditional roles and led to a large increase in the number of women in the security sector in Liberia (including the police and defense forces). Further, the number of girls enrolling in schools has risen dramatically and rates of sexual abuse are said to have decreased.³⁷



“Before I was not exposed to women’s issues. Now my eyes are open. Today, I am not ashamed or afraid to be among men and take part in discussions. Now I am one of the police commanders for the women’s section...” Zelen Garlo, AJW Project Participant, Liberia. ActionAid has trained 15 police officers of the Liberian Women and Children Protection Section as part of its Access to Justice for Women project.

Let us make this the beginning of a new decade in which women can put their stamp on conflict resolution so that throughout the world we can have more effective peace-making and more sustainable peacebuilding.

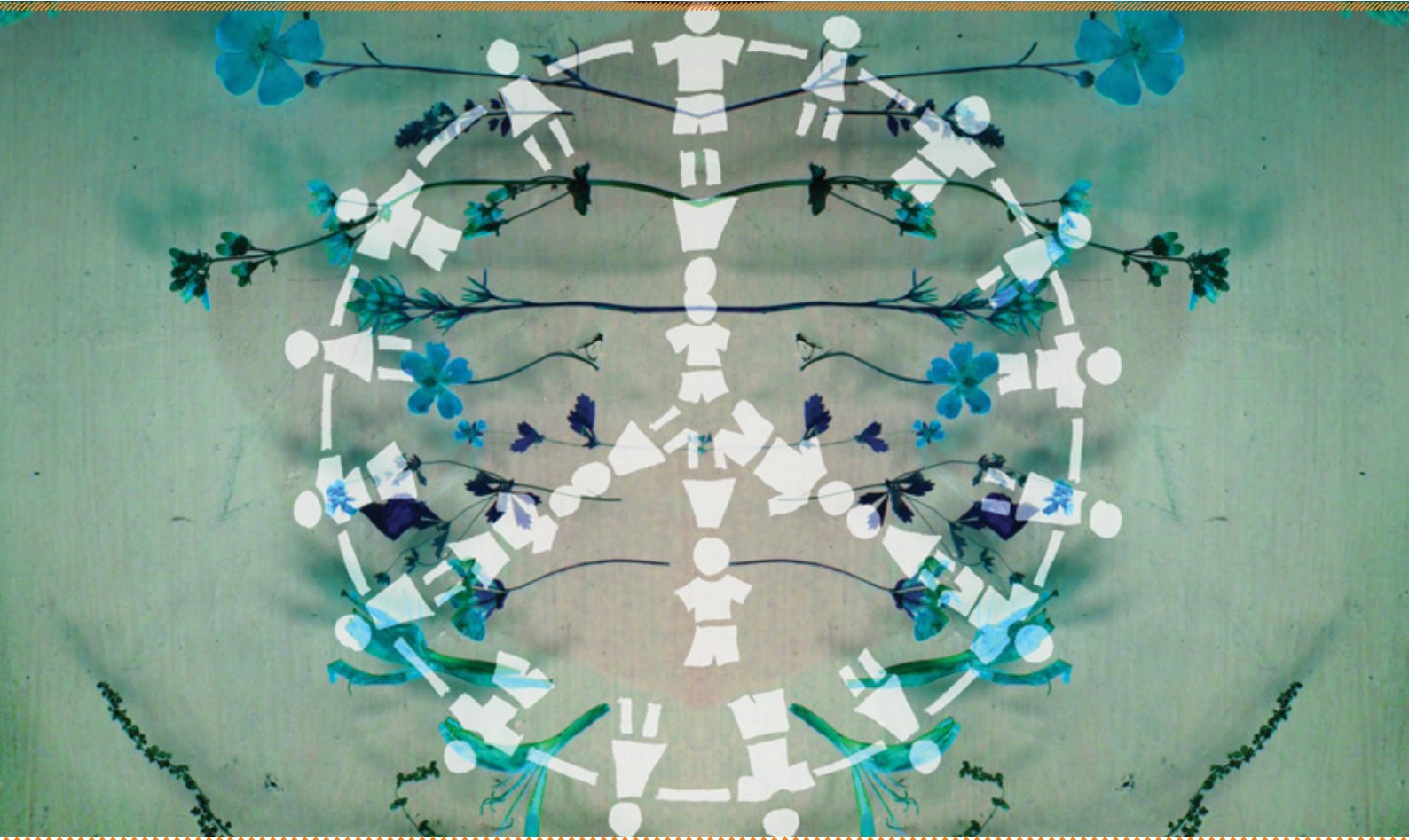
Statement by UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet at the Security Council Open Debate on Women and Peace and Security, 26 October 2010



Women for Human Rights has been working for the rights of widows in Nepal since 1994 and through advocacy and awareness-raising succeeded in ensuring the rights of widows were recognised in the interim Nepali Constitution and the Nepali Government's National Action Plan on SCR 1325. Activities have included weekly social mobilisation classes on the rights of widows within SCR 1325; networks with local stakeholders; and awareness-raising campaigns such as street drama and publications on the issues facing widows. Widows have also been supported to bring cases of violence and violation of property rights to the local authorities.

On the eve of the Oslo Donor Conference for Sudan in 2005, fifty Sudanese women demanded that a women's fund be established within the Multi-Donor Trust Fund to specifically finance women-specific programmes with women's organisations accorded a formal role in the management and disbursement of funds.³⁸

● **Female leadership:**
northern
Afghanistan



● **Female head
of Community
Development
Council**
northern Afghanistan

Women in Shah Rahim, Balkh province, Afghanistan have been particularly vulnerable to fighting, and are left illiterate, unable to earn money, and facing domestic violence and poverty. CARE Afghanistan works with women in Community Development Councils (CDCs) and their role in decision making is growing. Women negotiate projects and local men support their engagement. The community has access to portable water, irrigation systems and a community centre. The female head of the CDC is recognised as vital to their community and plays a key role in mediating community problems and reducing corruption.

What can the UK Government do?

The UK Government has a strong record on women, peace and security and was instrumental in the passage of the WPS resolutions. Most recently, the UK launched a new Government National Action Plan on 1325. However, what is required now is concrete action backed by resources and commitment to fully integrate women into decision making levels of conflict resolution, prevention and peacemaking. A number of key recommendations for the UK Government are outlined on the back of this publication which, if implemented, could create real change for women and help make the participation promise a reality.

End Notes

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² MIT Centre for International Studies, *What the Women Say: Participation and UNSCR 1325*, October 2010

³ Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdury, The Washington DC Celebration of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, 4 November 2010

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⁵ Gretchen Luhsinger, ed., *Power, Voice and Rights: A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific*, United Nations Development Programme, 2010

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⁸ Report of the Secretary General, *Women's Participation in Peacebuilding*, A/65/354-S/2010/466, 7 September 2010, <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N10/508/20/PDF/N1050820.pdf?OpenElement> p.14

⁹ Bina Agarwal "Does Women's Proportional Strength Affect Their Participation?" *World Development*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 2010.

¹⁰ DPKO, *Ten Year Impact Study on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security in Peacekeeping*, 2010, p.20

¹¹ Although this is a simplistic representation of the problem it demonstrates the mutually reinforcing effects of women's exclusion.

¹² Quoted in *What the Women Say: Participation and UNSCR 1325*, op cit. p.24.

¹³ <http://www.unifem.org/campaigns/1325plus10/about-resolution-1325/>

¹⁴ UN Secretary-General's report [S/2010/173] on the role of indicators to monitor the implementation of 1325 www.peacewomen.org/portal_initiative_initia-five.php?id=451

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²⁶ *Ibid.* p.18

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³⁶ DPKO, *Ten Year Impact Study* op cit. p.27

³⁷ See <http://www.opendemocracy.net/blog/liberia/kristen-cordell/2009/10/08/liberia-women-peacekeepers-and-human-security>

³⁸ UNIFEM, *Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations* op cit. p.12

³⁹ See UNIFEM, *Building Women, Peace and Security into Standard Procedures for Conflict Resolution* op cit.

Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS) is an expert working group of peace and development NGOs, academics and grassroots peace builders.

Building on UNSCR 1325, GAPS promotes, facilitates and monitors the meaningful inclusion of gender perspectives in all aspects of UK policy and practice on peace and security.

GAPS is currently running the *No women, no peace.* campaign which calls upon the UK Government to honour commitments made to women in conflict.

For more details, please visit: <http://www.nowomennopeace.org/>



GAPS member organisations:



This briefing was written by *Sharon Smee*.

The cover illustration is by *Asako Yanagita*.

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May 2011

What can the UK Government do?

Demand women are at the table:

- Demand the meaningful participation of women at all levels of discussion on conflict including post-conflict planning processes. The UK should not engage with or contribute funding to a peace process unless there is a minimum 30 per cent women and 30 per cent men at the table.
- Proactively insist on women's involvement in donor conferences including direct consultation, participation and involvement of civil society and women's groups.
- Develop a clear strategy on women's involvement in peacekeeping which articulates how and by whom wider support for women's meaningful participation in national and local peacebuilding and recovery processes will be provided.
- Election support programming should provide governments with technical support in applying gender quotas and ensuring the safety of female candidates and voters.

Give women a platform:

- Representatives from the UK visiting conflict-affected countries should meet with women's organisations to give these women a greater profile to influence the priorities of their governments.
- Provide an annual day on which women can visit the UK country offices (similar to the Global Open Days held by the UN) to enable women to put forward their recommendations as to how SCR 1325 could better meet their needs.

Address gender imbalances and supporting women's involvement in security and justice provision:

- Any training of police and security forces conducted by the UK should ensure women's involvement and should focus on the importance of SCR 1325 and subsequent resolutions.
- Highlight the role of women and girls in disarmament initiatives, including the inclusion of a needs assessment in each context.
- Set targets to increase the number of women in UK uniformed components of UN peacekeeping operations.

Build women's capacities:

- Training should be specific to women's participation in peace and security issues such as conflict and gender analysis, scenario assessment, conflict resolution, and mediation and negotiating skills.
- Develop a roster of experienced women practitioners to serve as intermediaries, mentors and provide training and support.

Back up promises with resources:

- Meet the UN target of minimum 15 per cent of post-conflict spending on women's recovery needs and empowerment, including direct financing to women's civil society organisations.
- Guarantee specific funding to enable women's participation including information and logistical support to participate in processes (including facilities such as transportation costs and childcare) and provide financial support for female candidates in elections.
- Ensure post-conflict recovery and economic programmes take into account the needs of women and track the funds invested in women, peace and security programming.
- Support and provide ambitious funding for UN Women to enable delivery on its thematic priority of ensuring women's full participation in conflict resolution.

Lead by example:

- Ensure women, peace and security is a standing item in the agenda of the UK National Security Council.
- Appoint a female minister with Cabinet status in DFID, MOD or FCO.
- Measure progress using indicators including the number of women taking part in peace talks, the gender content of peace agreements and the extent to which post-conflict reparations, economic recovery programmes and DDR processes benefit women.³⁹
- Collect gender disaggregated data to develop a more accurate picture of women's needs as well as documenting and analysing women's contributions to peace and security.
- Support public education campaigns tailored to the conditions in each country to promote SCR 1325 and women's participation.